

## COUNTRY DATA: UNITED STATES: Information from the CIA World Factbook

### INTRODUCTION

Britain's American colonies broke with the mother country in 1776 and were recognized as the new nation of the United States of America following the Treaty of Paris in 1783. During the 19th and 20th centuries, 37 new states were added to the original 13 as the nation expanded across the North American continent and acquired a number of overseas possessions. The two most traumatic experiences in the nation's history were the Civil War (1861-65), in which a northern Union of states defeated a secessionist Confederacy of 11 southern slave states, and the Great Depression of the 1930s, an economic downturn during which about a quarter of the labor force lost its jobs. Buoyed by victories in World Wars I and II and the end of the Cold War in 1991, the US remains the world's most powerful nation state. Over a span of more than five decades, the economy has achieved steady growth, low unemployment and inflation, and rapid advances in technology.

### GEOGRAPHY

<b>Location</b>	North America, bordering both the North Atlantic Ocean and the North Pacific Ocean, between Canada and Mexico
<b>Area</b>	9,826,675 sq km
<b>Climate</b>	mostly temperate, but tropical in Hawaii and Florida, arctic in Alaska, semiarid in the great plains west of the Mississippi River, and arid in the Great Basin of the southwest; low winter temperatures in the northwest are ameliorated occasionally in January and February by warm chinook winds from the eastern slopes of the Rocky Mountains
<b>Natural Resources</b>	coal, copper, lead, molybdenum, phosphates, rare earth elements, uranium, bauxite, gold, iron, mercury, nickel, potash, silver, tungsten, zinc, petroleum, natural gas, timber <i>note: the US has the world's largest coal reserves with 491 billion short tons accounting for 27% of the world's total</i>
<b>Total Renewable Water Resources</b>	3,069 cu km (1985)
<b>Freshwater Withdrawal</b>	total: 477 cu km/yr (13%/46%/41%) per capita: 1,600 cu m/yr (2000)
<b>Natural Hazards</b>	tsunamis; volcanoes; earthquake activity around Pacific Basin; hurricanes along the Atlantic and Gulf of Mexico coasts; tornadoes in the Midwest and Southeast; mud slides in California; forest fires in the west; flooding; permafrost in northern Alaska, a major impediment to development volcanism: the United States experiences volcanic activity in the Hawaiian Islands, Western Alaska, the Pacific Northwest, and in the Northern Mariana Islands; both Mauna Loa (elev. 4,170 m, 13,678 ft) in Hawaii and Mount Rainier (elev. 4,392 m, 14,409 ft) in Washington have been deemed "Decade Volcanoes" by the International Association of Volcanology and Chemistry of the Earth's Interior, worthy of study due to their explosive history and close proximity to human populations; Pavlof (elev. 2,519 m, 8,264 ft) is the most active volcano in Alaska's Aleutian Arc and poses a significant threat to air travel since the area constitutes a major flight path between North America and East Asia; St. Helens (elev. 2,549 m, 8,363 ft), famous for the devastating 1980 eruption, remains active today; numerous other historically active volcanoes exist, mostly concentrated in the Aleutian arc and Hawaii; they include: in

	Alaska: Aniakchak, Augustine, Chiginagak, Fourpeaked, Iliamna, Katmai, Kupreanof, Martin, Novarupta, Redoubt, Spurr, Wrangell; in Hawaii: Trident, Ugashik-Peulik, Ukinrek Maars, Veniaminof; in the Northern Mariana Islands: Anatahan; and in the Pacific Northwest: Mount Baker, Mount Hood
<b>Environmental Issues</b>	air pollution resulting in acid rain in both the US and Canada; the US is the largest single emitter of carbon dioxide from the burning of fossil fuels; water pollution from runoff of pesticides and fertilizers; limited natural fresh water resources in much of the western part of the country require careful management; desertification
<b>PEOPLE</b>	
<b>Population</b>	310,232,863 (July 2010 est.)
<b>Ethnic Groups</b>	white 79.96%, black 12.85%, Asian 4.43%, Amerindian and Alaska native 0.97%, native Hawaiian and other Pacific islander 0.18%, two or more races 1.61% (July 2007 estimate) <i>note:</i> a separate listing for Hispanic is not included because the US Census Bureau considers Hispanic to mean persons of Spanish/Hispanic/Latino origin including those of Mexican, Cuban, Puerto Rican, Dominican Republic, Spanish, and Central or South American origin living in the US who may be of any race or ethnic group (white, black, Asian, etc.); about 15.1% of the total US population is Hispanic
<b>Religions</b>	Protestant 51.3%, Roman Catholic 23.9%, Mormon 1.7%, other Christian 1.6%, Jewish 1.7%, Buddhist 0.7%, Muslim 0.6%, other or unspecified 2.5%, unaffiliated 12.1%, none 4% (2007 est.)
<b>Languages</b>	English 82.1%, Spanish 10.7%, other Indo-European 3.8%, Asian and Pacific island 2.7%, other 0.7% (2000 census) <i>note:</i> Hawaiian is an official language in the state of Hawaii
<b>Literacy Rate</b>	99%
<b>Major Infectious Diseases</b>	HIV/AIDS - people living with HIV/AIDS: 1.2 million (2007 est.)
<b>GOVERNMENT</b>	
<b>Type</b>	Constitution-based federal republic; strong democratic tradition
<b>Independence</b>	4 July 1776 (from Great Britain)
<b>Constitution</b>	17 September 1787, effective 4 March 1789
<b>Legal System</b>	federal court system based on English common law; each state has its own unique legal system of which all but one (Louisiana, which is still influenced by the Napoleonic Code) is based on English common law; judicial review of legislative acts; has not accepted compulsory ICJ jurisdiction
<b>ECONOMY</b>	
<b>Agricultural Products</b>	wheat, corn, other grains, fruits, vegetables, cotton; beef, pork, poultry, dairy products; fish; forest products
<b>Industries</b>	leading industrial power in the world, highly diversified and technologically advanced; petroleum, steel, motor vehicles, aerospace, telecommunications, chemicals, electronics, food processing, consumer goods, lumber, mining
<b>Import commodities</b>	agricultural products 4.9%, industrial supplies 32.9% (crude oil 8.2%), capital goods 30.4% (computers, telecommunications equipment, motor vehicle parts, office machines, electric power machinery), consumer goods 31.8% (automobiles, clothing, medicines, furniture, toys)

Import Partners	China 19.3%, Canada 14.24%, Mexico 11.12%, Japan 6.14%, Germany 4.53% (2009)
Export Commodities	agricultural products (soybeans, fruit, corn) 9.2%, industrial supplies (organic chemicals) 26.8%, capital goods (transistors, aircraft, motor vehicle parts, computers, telecommunications equipment) 49.0%, consumer goods (automobiles, medicines) 15.0%
Export Partners	Canada 19.37%, Mexico 12.21%, China 6.58%, Japan 4.84%, UK 4.33%, Germany 4.1% (2009)
Per Capita GDP	\$46,000 (2009 est.)
Population below poverty line	12% (2004 est.)

\*CITATIONS: All information included above is extracted from the CIA World Factbook except where noted.